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The Volunteer

. . . a newsletter by and for the Volunteers of the Peace Corps

JANUARY, 1962 | VOL. I, NO. I | Peace Corps, Washington 25, D.C.

This is the first issue of THE VOLUNTEER, a newsletter by and for the Peace Corps Volunteers, in training and on assignment. It will be published monthly and mailed to the volunteers and their immediate families.

THE VOLUNTEER is designed to link PCVs everywhere—to keep the teachers aides in the Philippines informed of the activities of the surveyors and engineers in Tanganyika, to create a bond between a community development team in Colombia and an agricultural team in Pakistan.

The general news of Peace Corps activities and achievements will be covered monthly by THE PEACE CORPS NEWS. THE VOLUNTEER, however, is written for you, to be read by you—and anyone else directly interested in the volunteer as an individual.

It is prepared by the Division of Volunteer Support Services of PC/W. Material for publication, that is information about your own activities which you think will be of interest to other volunteers, should arrive in Washington by the fifth day of each month preceding publication.

As you know, your objective is service, to perform with the best of your ability, skill and dedication, the work to which your host government has assigned you. Of course you will want to write home of some of the variety of new experiences which you are having, and this next reminder may be unnecessary. But just the same: *You are a guest abroad.* Nothing you write home should be, or ever give the appearance of being, an intelligence report.

Otherwise, if you have a problem, a question, a complaint, write THE VOLUNTEER any time. The editors will expedite an answer.

Thus, this first issue is far from complete. It will serve, however, to give you an indication of what *we* think *you* want in your publication. The February issue should be more detailed, readable, interesting and serviceable, if you will send your information, questions, comments and criticisms to us no later than January 5. The address is: THE VOLUNTEER, Peace Corps, Wash. 25, D. C.

And in the meantime, know that all of the personnel of PC/W wish you a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year. THE EDITORS

THE PEACE CORPS — SOME SECOND THOUGHTS

William Hessler, Foreign News Analyst for the Cincinnati (Ohio) Enquirer recently reassessed his ideas about the Peace Corps. Here are excerpts from his article:

"When the Peace Corps was first projected, more than a year ago, I had serious doubts. I doubted the wisdom of trying it, and its chance for survival without real trouble if it were tried. But, like most people, I was prepared to look at it with an open mind and to revise my appraisal on the basis of its performance.

"While respecting and even admiring the earnest and idealistic spirit of those promoting the idea, I was fearful of several things. First, I saw the possibility of resentment among labor groups in the countries where young Americans went to work.

"Second, I was troubled that Peace Corps members would either (1) arouse local envy if they lived on U.S. standards or else (2) get sick or die of starvation if they lived on local standards of the more backward countries.

"Third, I anticipated that a large number of young, energetic Americans, especially males, would stumble into a good deal of personal trouble, in the absence of the discipline possible with a military group. Finally, I doubted that such a corps could limit its recruits to the genuinely dedicated people who alone would be useful and effective in these projects.

"At this point, I am inclined to revise my appraisal considerably. The Peace Corps is far better managed and more successful than I anticipated. It has had far less trouble. It seems to me a much sounder enterprise than I had visualized in advance.

"My questionings were not from any lack of approval for the basic idea. The United States over the decades has always been eager to share its resources, its skills, and its ebullient faith in man's destiny with other peoples. I have seen the work of American missionaries in many countries of Asia and Africa, and I know how great their contribution has been, especially in education . . .

"My concern was that government would not be able to do the same sort of thing, because a public enterprise is different in important ways. I have kicked around in underdeveloped and primitive countries a good bit.

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And I am quite prepared to be uncomfortable and to take some risks to health in order to see and learn and report . . .

"I was perhaps more conscious than many persons of the formidable adjustment problem that was waiting for recruits to the Peace Corps.

"Sargent Shriver and his lieutenants have done some wise things with the Peace Corps and avoided many pitfalls. They have raised the average age markedly from the original blueprint. They have recruited slowly and screened carefully. They have not let the corps become a refuge from military service.

"They have chosen projects with the utmost care, and without haste. And they have put heavy stress on education, which is the field of greatest opportunity and greatest need, and also the field to which Americans can bring the most expertise.

"Nine months after its launching, the Peace Corps has had around 14,000 applicants, of whom 9,000 have taken exams. But there are only about 400 overseas, of whom only a handful are actually at work—the others still in training. Another 400 are in training in the U.S.A. Even next summer, only about 2,000 to 2,500 will be recruited and in training.

"This is a slow start, but that surely is wise. I've been asked how a few hundred young people can accomplish anything significant—in the whole, vast, underdeveloped world. This doesn't worry me, for I have visited countries in Africa where a hundred or so missionaries did the entire educational job for 30 or 40 years—plus a sizable part of the medical care and public health. If they are skilled and tactful and dedicated, a few people can do an amazingly big job in a country that's starting from scratch . . .

"Basically (the Peace Corps) embodies a valid and honorable American tradition. It is a tradition of doing good in the world, and especially among less fortunate peoples—as intelligently as possible, and always generously. No nation ever damaged itself by acting in that spirit.

JOIN THE PEACE CORPS!

The opportunity to work with the Peace Corps is continuing to attract candidates by the hundreds. The latest exam was taken by 2,310 candidates, an impressive number since the previous exam had been given only eight weeks earlier. The number of applicants now stands at 15,973 with 8,000 men and women currently "eligible and available." A large part of this continued public interest is a result of the early success and enthusiasm of the first PCVs to go abroad.

Enthusiastic PCVs in the field, of course, are the most effective recruiters anywhere. Only you have had the unique experience that is the Peace Corps; thus, you can give the best picture of the life of a PCV. If you think what you are doing would be as worthwhile for someone at home, why not write him about it?

OTHER NEWSLETTERS

The volunteers in Colombia and the Philippines have started their own newsletters. They are intended to keep the PCVs in each group informed of the activities of the individuals in the group, no matter how distant each may be.

It is hoped that other groups in other countries will undertake similar projects. THE VOLUNTEER is glad to have company, and it is the hope of THE VOLUNTEER staff that it will receive a copy of each country or project newsletter.

Where news of interest to the full PCV roster appears in a local newsletter, THE VOLUNTEER will reprint it—with full credit—for distribution around the world.

AT YOUR SERVICE

When a Peace Corps Volunteer gets his travel allotment, his passport, his airplane seat on overseas assignment, his living allowance, his $2 personal allowance, he does so because someone in the Division of Volunteer Support Services in the Office of Peace Corps Volunteers of the Peace Corps, Washington, D. C. has shuffled the right papers and turned instruction to action. If a volunteer wants to assign his $75 a month to his family during his term in the Peace Corps, if he loses his passport (not recommended) or wants the address of a PCV in Tanganyika, if he has an inquiry about insurance or medical care, his request is handled by DVSS. And if he has a gripe, DVSS serves as the complaint department. In short, DVSS is the volunteer's personnel department, and indeed, it is DVSS which maintains the personnel records which will record every step of the volunteer's Peace Corps career. But the use of initials DVSS/PCV/PC/W to designate the division in interoffice correspondence is the closest DVSS intends to get to the traditional Washington tangle of red tape. It is intended, instead, to be the most *personal* personnel office in government —to serve as the helpful hand of the Peace Corps reaching out from Washington to the most remote volunteer on the most remote assignment in the world.

DVSS has been established to find the answer to anything, in the Peace Corps or out of it, so long as the request comes from a volunteer. One of its regular jobs is the preparation and publication of THE VOLUNTEER. It also relays information about a volunteer to parents, and answers questions to the Peace Corps from parents. And it coordinates the non-job activities of the volunteers in policy as well as practice between the other offices of PC/W.

The members of the DVSS staff are made up of people with long experience in personnel and a thorough knowledge of Washington ways. It is this experience which has taught what *not* to do as much as what to do, blended with a personal concern for the volunteer as a mature individual which promises to make DVSS an unique office.

WHO'S WHO IN PC/W:
DR. PAUL GEREN

As Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, Paul Geren is Director Sargent Shriver's administrative right arm. "The Peace Corps is a magnificent idea, an idea which has been given expression and resolve, form and life by Shriver," Geren says. "The task which we in my office have is to support the magnificence of the idea with the orderly facts of organization, detail and day-to-day performance."

Geren set himself to his task on September 15 and has pursued it on a six- or seven-day week since, stopping only briefly on November 17 to be officially sworn-in by Secretary Rusk. But as Geren spent two-and-a-half months "unofficially" organizing the Peace Corps administration, so had he spent most of his life in unofficial preparation for his Peace Corps assignment.

Born in Arkansas, raised in Texas and Arkansas, and earning his Ph.D. at Harvard, Geren anticipated the Peace Corps in the choice of his first job. He went to Judson College in Rangoon, Burma, as an economics teacher. But it was November, 1941. With Pearl Harbor, Geren's Peace Corps training began in dead earnest.

The U. S. Army had no induction facilities in Burma, so Geren joined Dr. Gordon Seagrave, the famed Burma surgeon, as an ambulance driver in a hospital unit which Seagrave had put in the service of the Northern Chinese armies. It was with this unit, and now on foot, that Geren ultimately escaped from Burma in the famous march led by General Joseph Stilwell. It was a two hundred mile "walk" across the Chin Hills, a trek only vaguely simulated in the four-day hikes PCVs make at the training camp in Puerto Rico.

Eventually, Geren enlisted in the U. S. Army in India, as a medical combat soldier, and subsequently was given a field commission as 2nd Lieutenant. He was decorated with the Bronze Star. In February, 1946, having served abroad with no home leave since 1941, Geren was discharged and went back home to marry Elizabeth Powers of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The Gerens spent a year in Kentucky while he taught at Berea College. He then launched his own personal Peace Corps career, joining the Foreign Service in 1947. Geren's assignments included service as vice consul in Bombay, first secretary in Damascus, and deputy chief of mission in Amman, Jordan.

In 1956, Geren gave up the Foreign Service to return to his alma mater, Baylor University in Waco, Texas, as executive vice president. Two years later, he went to Dallas as executive director of that city's Council on World Affairs which, under Geren's administration, moved the late Secretary Dulles to call it "the most vigorous and successful organization of its kind in the world."

The Deputy Director, Dr. Paul Geren

Geren left Dallas in March 1961, to become a member of the Bureau of Economic Affairs in the State Department. The Geren family now included three unusually pretty daughters, Natasha, 14, Juliana, 12, and Nancy Magdalene, 9, Perhaps Geren entertained the idea of settling quietly with his family into the Washington routine, perhaps even to work on a new book to join the four he already had written. But in the spring he met Shriver, who was then beginning to give shape to the Peace Corps.

"Like millions of Americans," Geren said, "I read the President's original enunciation of the Peace Corps and I was excited and stimulated by the idea. I knew from my own experiences what such an idea could become, given the proper direction. And when I met Shriver, I knew I had met the man who could make the idea work."

Shriver was equally impressed with Geren's long experience as diplomat and educator. In August, Shriver invited Geren to join him at the Peace Corps. Geren accepted immediately.

Geren has a rare affinity with the volunteers. Because he has spent so many years abroad, he knows first hand the problems of language, cultural shock, adjustment, of simple homesickness. He also knows the job that is the volunteers to do, and that it can be done.

RED TAPE

Late in November, letters went out to all PCVs then in training or in the field from W. P. Kelly, Director of Contracts and Logistics, PC/W. The letter terminated the contracts between the Peace Corps and the volunteers. In their place, Kelly sent out copies of the Peace Corps Volunteer Personnel Policies with a form to be signed by the volunteer testifying that he had read and complied with the new Personnel Policies.

In brief, all this is necessitated by the fact that the Peace Corps originally existed only by executive order of the President. It did not become a permanent federal agency until Congress passed the Peace Corps Act, which the President signed into law on September 22. Thus, the contracts became obsolete, and are now replaced by the terms and conditions of the PCV Personnel Policies.

Mr. Kelly invites PCVs to file a complaint with him if they feel the new policies are not as good or better than those contained in the old contract. However, complaints have to be filed within 45 days after Mr. Kelly's letter and the PCV Personnel Policies statement are received.

ADVICE: Read the new policies thoroughly and either write Mr. Kelly—if you have a complaint—or sign the acceptance form and return it, pronto. A properly signed acceptance form is your only assurance of readily receiving your $75 monthly allotment at the conclusion of your tour.

VOLUNTEERS HONORED

Seven men in the Nigeria-Harvard teaching project were given an early indication of how welcome good teaching can be to African students. The Peace Corps Volunteers had, as part of their training at University College, Ibadan, been assigned to a month's practice teaching in Lagelu Grammar School in Ibadan. Lagelu, with its all-Nigerian staff had previously had no practice teachers of any nationality. The Peace Corpsmen were particularly eager to do a good job.

On the last day of their practice teaching, the volunteers were surprised to find the whole school assembled in their honor. Representatives of the student body expressed their appreciation of the work done by the new teachers. One admitted that he and some of his friends had been skeptical about the success of the venture when they had heard that the Americans were coming to Lagelu. But, he said, now they were sorry to see these teachers leave. In fact they hoped that some of the group would return to Lagelu for their regular teaching assignment.

The PCVs included Stan Field, Dave Hibbard, Jim Lancaster, Paul Newman, Tom Seiler, Joel Splansky and Bob Teller.

THE RAPPELLER: Janet Hanneman, a PCV from Junction City, Kansas, is engaged in the art of rappelling, or the technique developed by mountain climbers whereby one lowers oneself over a precipitous surface by means of a rope. Janet is practicing on the dam near the Peace Corps training center near Arecibo, Puerto Rico. As a PCV in West Pakistan Janet probably will not need to do any rappelling, but the practice helped her learn she could do something she'd never before thought possible.

FILIPINOS WELCOME PEACE CORPS

The first contingent of Peace Corps teaching assistants to land in the Philippines received a warm welcome. The road to the University of the Philippines College of Agriculture at Los Banos, where the volunteers are completing their training, was lined with people, standing in the rain, waving flags and cheering the coming of the Peace Corps. When the group stopped for a ceremony at one of the schools along the way, children rushed forward with umbrellas to shield the PCVs from the rain. As PCV David Pierson commented in a letter to his parents, "We felt like we were all miniature Gen. MacArthurs once again 'returning.'" He added, "The important thing is that they want us here much more than we ever realized, and it leaves us with an aura of humility and we begin to realize the complexity of the job ahead of us."

END OF A HUBBUB

On October 14, 1961, Margery Michelmore, a PCV in training as an English teacher at University College, Ibadan, in Nigeria lost a post card she had written to a friend in Massachusetts. It was found by a Nigerian student, who interpreted the message as being derogatory to his country. The post card was mimeographed, circulated on the campus and a student meeting was called, both to discuss and protest the card. Some of the students left the meeting in a protest against the protests.

The principal of University College, Ibadan, the Nigerian government and the U. S. Ambassador to Nigeria were all involved in the incident, on a close and detailed basis. The American press gave the story wide circulation.

Miss Michelmore, by her own volition, apologized both in person and in writing for the post card. But the furor had made the relationship between Miss Michelmore and her service to the Nigerian school system incompatible. Therefore, at her request, the Peace Corps decided to reassign her.

Miss Michelmore had committed no act of deliberate intent to damage either the Peace Corps or the Nigerian project. She was a college graduate, and had worked for a year as a researcher for the Reader's Digest. With this combination of circumstance and qualification, plus Miss Michelmore's own request, she was offered and accepted a clerical job in the Washington office, not as a PCV but as a volunteer support trainee. She has taken the standard Federal Service Entrance Examination and awaits Civil Service classification.

NEW CHIEF OF TRAINING

Dr. Joseph F. Kauffman was named Chief of the Training Division of the Peace Corps on December 4. Formerly dean of students at Brandeis University, Kauffman has been Deputy Associate Director for Peace Corps Volunteers since mid-April, and in that role served as training officer for the Nigeria-Harvard project and set up the India project at Ohio State—in addition to his many other duties.

Kauffman will have responsibility for all PCV training programs, domestic and overseas. There are 17 new programs now on the books, including repeat programs for the Philippines and Colombia. Kauffman is particularly anxious to hear from PCVs in the field concerning their own training. "We want all the feed-back we can get," Kauffman said, "whether it is good or bad. The experience of the volunteers in the field as it reflects the adequacy of their Peace Corps training, is the best teacher we have in improving our subsequent training programs."

In his new job, Kauffman succeeds Lawrence E. Dennis, Associate Director for Peace Corps Volunteers, who had also been serving as Acting Chief of the Training Division. Dr. Robert W. Iversen, senior training officer, will now serve as Deputy Chief of the Division of Training.

MINUTIAE . . .

"Our men in Tanganyika" were scheduled as the stars of a recent TV color spectacular. On Dec. 15, NBC was to present an hour-long show entitled "The Peace Corps in Tanganyika" and featuring Matt Wright, Dennis Galvin, George Johnson and Tom Katus. Also set to appear were Leonard Bloom, John McPhee and Alexander Quattlebaum. According to publicity releases received from NBC, the show includes shots from El Paso, Arecibo in Puerto Rico, Mt. Kilimanjaro, and a local Tanganyikan club "where Peace Corps men and Africans join in playing guitars and bongo drums and drinking pombe, a local beverage made of banana juice and millet seed." Quite a show . . . More news on the dramatic front . . . Caroline Tinoly in Nigeria has a comic role in University College, Ibadan's *musical* production of "Lysistrata." The songs, which bear more than a passing resemblance to "The Boy Friend," are a long way from Aristophanes but the show should be fun to do . . . Bikes have been issued to the group in East Pakistan and the Peace Corps has already made a notable contribution to Dacca's traffic problem . . . Bashir, the renowned camel driver brought to the U. S. by Vice President Johnson shared one leg of the trip to Pakistan with the volunteers. Apparently, he received the lion's share of public attention . . . Appendices don't seem to last long in Latin America. Enroute to Chile, Charles Fox got off the boat in Panama to have the first Peace Corps appendectomy. Bruce Richardson, in Colombia, lost his in a clinic in Pasto . . . The President of Colombia, incidentally, asked Mr. Shriver on his recent trip through South America to *double* the number of volunteers now serving in the country. This, despite the fact that one man had burned down his house when his gasoline stove exploded . . . Have a merry Christmas, all, and don't forget to write.

COLOMBIA TOWNS VIE FOR PCVS

Local rivalry between two towns in Colombia has forced a team of volunteers to split up their housekeeping arrangements. George Kroon and Jim Mullins stayed in the town of Fuquene while final preparations were being made on their living quarters in a village lower in the valley. When it came time to move, the townspeople of Fuquene objected. They were loath to relinquish their guests to the rival village.

By stationing one man in Fuquene and one in the valley, local pride was placated. And every day, both men meet at a halfway point to carry on their work.

THE LATEST OVERSEAS DEPARTURES:*

To: Comilla, East Pakistan
October 26, 1961

Robert Ahlers Oceanside, N. Y.
James Bausch New Brunswick, N. J.
Robert Burns St. Louis, Mo.
Kenneth Clark Riverside, Cal.
Jeanne Dumas Los Angeles, Cal.
Jean Ellickson St. Johns, Michigan
Robert F. George Stony Creek, Conn.
William Gold Oak Harbor, Wash.
Lloyd Goodson Thompson, Nebr.
William Guth Pittsburgh, Penna.
William Hein Denver, Colorado
Charles Hitchcock Le Habra, Cal.
Roger Hord Portland, Oregon
Judith Huneke Hanford, Cal.
Jack Jordan Aurora, Ill.
Conrad Linkiewicz New Bedford, Mass.
Florence McCarthy Solvang, Cal.
Peter McDonough Brooklyn, N. Y.
Robert McGuire Washington, D. C.
Thomas McMahon Rochester, N. Y.
David Phillips Riverside, Cal.
William Reder Long Island, N. Y.
Robert Saint Bakersfield, Cal.
Rachel Schauffler Fredonia, N. Y.
Thomas Scheerer Huntington Station, N. Y.
Marion Sidor Chicago, Ill.
Robert Taylor Oakdale, Cal.
Harold Tierman Torrance, Cal.
Peter VonChristierson Citrus Heights, Cal.

To: Nsukka, Nigeria
Nov. 24, 1961

Joseph Adamas Teaneck, N. J.
Elizabeth Alexander Palm Beach, Fla.
Lorena Blount Allerton, Iowa
Roswell Blount Allerton, Iowa
Frank Brockman Dobbs Ferry, N. Y.
Catherine Crook Pittsburgh, Penna.
Irving Destler W. Hartford, Conn.
Evelyn Doyle San Bernardino, Cal.
George Eaton Lawrence, Kan.
Gilbert Foster Wilkesboro, N. C.
Rochelle Foster Wilkesboro, N. C.
Joan Franklin Detroit, Mich.
Martin Gleason Chicago, Ill.
Mary Jones Great Falls, Mont.
John Kaechele Middleville, Mich.
Richard Kranzdorf New York, N. Y.
Roger Landrum Reed City, Mich.
Kay Law Stockton, Cal.
LeRoy Law Stockton, Cal.
Randall Longcore Alpena, Mich.
Judith McKay Fayetteville, N. C.
Doris Morgan Raleigh, N. C.
David Pibel Bartlett, Nebr.
Angelo Randazzo Philadelphia, Penna.
Helen Rupp Baltimore, Md.
Robert Scheppler Grand Prairie, Texas
David Schickele Fargo, N. D.
Vincenette Sparacio, N. Y.
Ruth Steward Vista, Cal.
Howard Swann Brookline, Mass.

* Editor's Note: OVERSEAS is planned as a continuing VOLUNTEER feature. Meanwhile, a complete roster of PCVs, alphabetized by name and project, is being completed and will be included as an insert in a subsequent issue of THE VOLUNTEER.

PEACE CORPS
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID